

# Illinois U. Library

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## Some of the Best Illinois High School Poetry of 1953

Selected by PAULENE M. YATES  
Maine Township High School

### FOREWORD

Reading the student-written poetry was an interesting and enlightening experience for me. The numerous entries indicated that you as teachers are doing much to encourage and inspire your pupils. Considering the age of the pupils who submitted poems, I thought that the poetry, as a whole, was noteworthy.

In making my choices, I tried to be as selective as possible. However, for the sake of achieving variety and securing as much representation as possible from the different classes and different schools, I permitted some violations of good poetry techniques. Because poetry is highly subjective, some of you perhaps will not agree with me in my choices. I hope that there will not be too many disappointments.

PAULENE M. YATES.

### THE 5:34

The weary housewife said:

"If tomorrow my world were torn in two,  
Blacked out, destroyed, I think I would remember  
This hour best of all the hours I knew:  
When cars came backing into the shabby station,  
Children scuffling the seats, and the women driving  
With ribbons around their hair, and the trains arriving,  
And the men swinging off with tired but practiced motion.

"Yes, I would remember my life like this," she said:  
 "Autumn, the platform red with falling leaves,  
 And a man coming toward me, the evening paper  
 Under his arm, and his hat pushed back on his head;  
 And wood smoke lying like haze on the quiet town,  
 And dinner waiting, and the sun just going down."

ANNE BJORNCRANTZ, '54, Evanston Township H. S.  
 Mary L. Taft, teacher

### SHUT-IN

He watches children scamper on the street  
 From his lone chair and never shows the stings  
 Their nimble feet leave sometimes; he smiles  
 And fashions dreams of wheels and sails and wings!

BARBARA SODT, '54, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero  
 Marjorie Diez, teacher

### MY KITTY

A living tumbleweed of silken fur,  
 Leaping,  
 Rolling,  
 Skipping on the wind-swept grass;  
 Jumping to reach the playful sunbeams;  
 Dizzily dancing to the musical breeze;  
 Suddenly stopping!  
 But quickly turning  
 To chase a mouse into his hole.  
 That's my Kitty.

MARY ELLEN KJELLGREN, '55, East Senior H. S., Rockford  
 Edna Youngquist, teacher

### TROIS BIJOUX

Life is  
 Three stones . . . the gem  
 Of birth, the diamond  
 Of marriage, and the marble of  
 The grave.

SARAH WOLF, '54, Naperville H. S.  
 Leona McBride, teacher

## TO POEMS

A poem is a dream—  
A dream of flight,  
A dream of joy and remembrance,  
Or a nightmare of sorrow and despair.

A poem has the power to lift you high—  
Above cities and seas,  
Above mountains and the moon,  
And far, far above the clouds.

A poem brings the joy—  
Of a baby's first ice cream cone,  
Of a boy's new baseball bat,  
Of a girl's first love,  
And of peace and home and health and kind hearts.

A poem carries sorrow—  
Sweet sorrow to bring gentle tears,  
Cruel sorrow to embitter men, to dash them down  
in despair's dark depths,  
Still sorrow of painful memories,  
And of death and the dead, life and the living.

A poem is a man-made dream  
Of present, future, past,  
That Grandmother Imagination sits day by day embroidering.

ALICE DAVIS, '55, University H. S., Normal  
Verna Hoyman, teacher

## THE BIRCH

Silver was its shade  
As it stood beneath the north wood sky  
Slim, youthful, and tall.  
But like a mirror revealing its antiquity  
There were places on the birch  
Untouched by silver.

MARJORIE ROSECRANCE, '54, West Senior H. S., Rockford  
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher



## IN THE SEA OF SILENCE

Here I lie, a skeleton, on the ocean floor,  
 Green and furry  
 With the moss of the deep.  
 I rest in a world of delight,  
 Of flashing, little fishes,  
 And mysterious, glistening grottoes.

The filtered sun in the water,  
 The light that is the philosopher's stone  
 Of the deep, is burnished gold in the day;  
 And the moon, a flowing sea of silver  
 In the salty night.

All around are whales and snails,  
 And forests of moving color,  
 With only fish and wrecked ships  
 To see their dazzling ballet.

Everything is quiet here  
 Far from the gnashing rocks of the coast,  
 The angry, hissing spray,  
 Away from the crashing breakers,  
 And the cold wind's breath.

The silky waters of the silent sea  
 Caress me,  
 Enveloping me in peace . . .

MICHAEL HOLQUIST, '54, West Senior H. S., Rockford  
 Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

## TRIOLET

I like to see the logs ablaze,  
     They warm the heart when hope is low,  
 The heart on dreary winter days.  
 I like to see the logs ablaze  
 Just as the sky at evening greys  
     And night winds softly start to blow.  
 I like to see the logs ablaze,  
     They warm the heart when hope is low.

RICHARD DORRIS, '54, Naperville H. S.  
 Leona McBride, teacher

## LIMERICK

There was a young man named Sliver,  
Who had an old model A flivver.

One day on the ice  
He spun around twice;  
Now ice water makes Sliver shiver.

NORMAN KEITH WYSE, '56, Downs H. S.  
Barbara Stuart, teacher

## CHRISTMAS NIGHT

The sky was clear,  
The stars were bright,  
And in a stable  
Far out of sight  
A crib was filled  
With a holy Light.

COLLEEN GLYNN, '57, Alleman H. S., Rock Island  
Sister Loyola, teacher

## ONLY MAN

Of all living things  
Only *man*  
Is scorned and dreaded . . .  
Only *man*  
Kills wantonly and needlessly . . .  
Only *man*,  
The wisest  
And yet the most foolish  
Of Nature's creations,  
Only *man*  
Has the audacity  
To think himself  
Supreme . . .

LESLIE WARE, '55, West Senior H. S., Rockford  
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

## SEA FEVER

I love to stand at  
The bow of a ship plowing  
The mighty ocean,  
And to be gripped by the thrill  
That daring Vikings once felt.

I love to smell the  
Fresh, salty sea air, drenched with  
The odor of tar  
And rope, which I breathe deeply  
Into lungs, bursting with joy.

I love the sound of  
Distant thunder as the surf  
Clashes against some  
Jagged cliffs which have not yet  
Yielded to the craving sea.

RALF J. KLINGLER, '55, Naperville H. S.  
Dorothy Scroggie, teacher

## OUR ELITE FELINE

We have at our house a particular feline  
Who makes for the chairs an unfaltering beeline;  
But if he can spot an inviting, snug lap,  
He curls there and stays for an undisturbed nap.

His meals are of tuna and salmon so fine,  
But on common cat food he refuses to dine!  
He washes his fur till it shines just like silk  
And rubs with his paw to remove excess milk.

Through fences and alleys he knows all the rounds;  
He chases cats bravely and even large hounds.  
But when softly he purrs and looks into your eyes,  
You declare all his errors are nothing but lies.

BARBARA DETRICK, '54, Peoria H. S.  
Emily E. Rice, teacher

## SNOW

Snow resembles a  
Tinsel wrapping. Both cover  
Ordinary things  
With dazzling beauty that, too,  
Soon gives way to realism.

VALERIE HESSEL, '54, West Senior H. S., Rockford  
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

Young George Washington chopped down a tree.  
He was sorry, as Father could see.  
But he said with a sigh,  
"I will not tell a lie;  
I just hit it because it hit me!"

DICK TUCKER, '54, Peoria H. S.  
Emily E. Rice, teacher

## OPERATION—DUCKS

The gun is bright, the sight is light,  
The stock is hard and cold—  
We're out to shoot some ducks tonight;  
The game is high and bold.

The blind is full of eerie sounds;  
The sky through which they pass  
Is blue and clear and full of stars;  
The lake is smooth as glass.

And soon a shade sweeps o'er the sky;  
Two shots ring loud and fast.  
A tumbling sound and from on high  
Two birds are ours at last.

With thumping hearts we watch them fall;  
We reach and hold them fast.  
No joy can equal ours at all;  
Success has come at last.

THOMAS KEHOE, '57, Alleman H. S., Rock Island  
Sister M. Amata, O.S.F., teacher



## THE SCHOLARLY MOUSE

Here in the library  
In a wee hole  
Lives a gray mouse  
With eyes black as coal.

He's really quite harmless  
So tiny and meek,  
But when most folks see him,  
They let out a shriek.

When into the library  
He sees me come,  
He cocks his pert head  
And begs for a crumb.

As I put the magazines  
Back on the shelf,  
He sits on the table  
And preens himself.

He scurries about  
When I dust off the books  
And scolds through his whiskers  
With scholarly looks.

And who should know more  
About these books than he,  
'Cause he's lived among them  
For years you can see.

His friends include  
Whittier, Shakespeare and Poe.  
He knows more about them  
Than you'll ever know.

He knows every cabinet,  
Shelf, drawer, and nook  
And just where to search  
When he wants a book.



That's more than most people  
Can do for themselves  
Who look for short stories  
On poetry shelves.

Though most individuals  
Think he's pretty dumb,  
You'll find that my mouse  
Is as smart as they come.

DOROTHY HANSON, '54, Bloom Township H. S., Chicago Heights  
Ethel Mellinger, teacher

### CHRISTMAS

What is Christmas?  
It is the tinkling of the bell rung by the Santa Claus beside  
the big kettle;  
The tired clerk's smile;  
The young mother urging her son to walk faster;  
The Christmas music in the bustling stores;  
It is the houses lighted up and decorated;  
The children happily sledding on the hills;  
The eager look in a youth's eyes as he searches for hidden  
packages;  
The youthful look on grandparents' faces as they decorate  
the tree.  
It is the assembled congregation joyously singing;  
It is the warmth which radiates from the old minister as  
he reads,  
"And there were in the same country, shepherds—"  
This is Christmas.

DON PANNABECKER, '54, Peoria H. S.  
Emily E. Rice, teacher

### DARK

Shrouding  
The earth with its  
Mystic coat of velvet,  
This guest is adorned with sparkling  
Jewels.

ANN FAGAN, '55, Naperville H. S.  
Dorothy Scroggie, teacher

**SKATERS**

On a frozen mountain pond  
Far off in the night,  
Glistening forms glide smoothly by,  
Clothed in gleaming white.

Through the whirling, swirling snow  
Flashing blades fly by ;  
Sparkling in the cold moonlight  
Gleaming from the sky.

In a spinning, endless whirlpool  
Round and round they flow ;  
Laughing, talking, whistling, singing,  
On and on they go.

CAROL IVES, '54, Moline H. S.  
Bess Barnett, teacher

**EPIGRAM**

If you see the clock hands move  
Your study habits could improve.

KENNETH BAUDER, '54, Naperville H. S.  
Leona McBride, teacher

**REMEMBER**

We laughed and danced together then,  
Had picnics on the beach,  
And ate the sandy sandwiches,  
With nothing out of reach.

The world was ours ; the sky was gold,  
And everything was gay.  
But spring turned into summertime,  
And then he went away.

It was not actually for long,  
Vacation only—yet,  
When you are one instead of two,  
A mem'ry can't forget.

MARY JANET BERGQUIST, '54, Evanston Township H. S.  
Mary L. Taft, teacher

### HEAVY AND SLOW

Heavy and slow down the stairs  
Comes an old man.  
One foot follows the other  
Slowly, slowly.  
His hand grasps the rail.  
His cane bears his weight.  
He stumbles!  
The rail and his cane save him.  
He continues.  
The end is so far away.  
Why bother?  
But he has started so he keeps on.  
He has reached the end.  
Why?  
There is no one to talk to,  
No one to laugh with,  
No one to love.  
Why did he bother?  
The old man can't remember.

Heavy and slow up the stairs  
Goes an old man.

MARIE HUDSON, '55, Evanston Township H. S.  
Mildred Wright, teacher

### THE MACHINE

The wheel turns, its  
Cogs meshing with those  
Of another wheel;  
And the other wheel  
Turns still another  
And then another . . .  
Levers move, up and down,  
Back and forth, incessantly.

A cog breaks, a few  
Wheels slip and then  
Move on again.  
The machine, unhindered,

Spews out new cogs  
And wheels and levers  
To move up and down,  
Around and around.

Old wheels rust ;  
Bright new ones take  
Their place and the  
Machine moves on ; faster,  
Wheels spinning, levers jerking ;  
Pounding metal heats—and  
Cracks. The machine slows,  
And rests. The rust begins.

JOHN FINCHER, '54, Bloom Township H. S., Chicago Heights  
Sara J. Fernald, teacher

### I LOVE—

Your shy, sweet kiss  
In a crowded place ;  
Your guarded look  
From face to face,  
To see who might have seen.  
You care—  
But I?  
I'd kiss you anywhere.

BARBARA BRENT, '56, Hyde Park H. S., Chicago  
Bernice Mahoney, teacher

### HOW NICE TO BE GROWN-UP

A grown-up's life is a wonderful life  
Without any cares or worries or strife ;  
No school, no homework, and no castor oil ;  
It's a party ; it's a picnic. There's no toil.  
Ah, yes, a grown-up's life is heaven . . .  
So thinks a freckled-faced lad of seven.

LOIS GORMAN, '56, Sacred Heart H. S., Chicago  
Sister Mary Andrea, B.V.M., teacher



**SPRING'S CHILDREN**

Spring calls—

She awakens her sleeping children.

    Their tiny green fingers poke up through the ground.

She smiles down upon them with warm rays of sunlight.

    They joyously climb from their dark winter beds.

She kisses their faces with rain.

She gives them bright attire:

    Lavender

        Violet

        Blue

    Pink

        Scarlet

        Rose

        Yellow and white;

To tiny girl flowers:

    Fluffy fairy dancing dresses with

        Frill upon frill of

        Delicate gauze;

To little boy flowers:

    Capes of swirling satin-like folds

        Spangled with dew-drops.

She lightly touches each upturned face with

    Her magic, fragrant fingers.

She rolls out a soft velvet carpet of green

    Around them.

The finishing touches completed,

    She bids them be happy

    And leaves them in summer's care.

JOANNE JACKSON, '54, East Senior H. S., Rockford  
Edna Youngquist, teacher

**CALCULATIONS**

Count your garden by the flowers,

Never by the weeds that grow;

Count your days by sunny hours,

Not remembering clouds at all.

Count your nights by stars, not shadows;

And then at this green springtime season,

Count your age by friends, not years.

JUSTINE KUHLMAN, '56, Larsen Junior H. S., Elgin  
Betty Rupp, teacher

## SONG OF SPRING

Sprays of blossoms through a silver mist;  
Broken sunbeams bringing gentle warmth;  
A shrill twitter from the old bird house;  
Daisies dancing on the soft, green grass  
Singing,  
Calling  
All together.  
Up spurts spring!

SARA OLANDER, '54, East Senior H. S., Rockford  
Edna Youngquist, teacher

## THE GREAT TRUTH

At times one knows it as he stands in the woods,  
Listening to the wind in the high branches  
When it whispers something that he can never  
Really understand.

One may know it when he stands alone at dawn,  
Watching in awe-filled silence as the sky pales,  
Flushing with the strange unchanging majesty  
Of the rising sun.

Sometimes in the quiet of a dark blue night,  
With millions of cold stars watching and waiting,  
One can hear the faint sound of far-off music,  
And it makes one sure.

ESTHER BOGUSCH, '54, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero  
Marjorie Diez, teacher

## CHRISTMAS AFTERGLOW

Tissue paper in a heap—  
Trimmed with mistletoe and holly!  
In the corner fast asleep,  
Hugging close her Christmas dolly,  
Baby dreams.

MARY MCHENRY, '55, Peoria H. S.  
Emily E. Rice, teacher

### THE THEATER

To the actor,  
The happiest place in the world  
Is the theater before the show,  
When the foyer is filled with laughing people  
Waiting for the curtain—  
Ready to forget their cares.

To the actor,  
The loneliest place in the world  
Is the theater after the show,  
When nothing remains but empty seats  
Littered with programs—  
And a dim echo of applause.

JOHN HENDRICKS, '54, Peoria H. S.  
Emily E. Rice, teacher

### RAIN

Like hundreds of tiny  
Silver-slippered feet  
It comes.  
Whirling in perfect  
Unison,  
Now a glissade, and  
Then a saute . . . arabesque . . .  
To the  
Accompanying orchestra of a  
Singing wind.

Slower . . .  
And slower . . .  
The light, sparkling slippers  
Dance.

All is quiet.  
The ballet has ended  
And all the weary feet  
Have found  
A home.

JOYCE SOYEZ, '53, University H. S., Normal  
Ruth Stroud, teacher

## WON OR LOST?

The free and roving Indian,  
Who, so straight and strong,  
Defended his lands against  
The White Man . . .  
Failed.  
For now . . .  
What has he?  
Nothing.

But the White Man,  
Who has  
Conquered . . .  
Has he really won?  
No,  
He has lost . . .  
Completely.

In a conquest of  
Greed,  
There is no  
Winner . . .  
Just  
Two losers . . .

KATHRYN WOLCOTT, '54, Niles Township H. S.  
Priscilla Baker, teacher

## COMFORT

In the distance shines His light,  
In this time of war,  
Shining to the lost at night,  
In the distance shines His light,  
Shining out to all in sight,  
God has shown His light before,  
In the distance shines His light,  
In this time of war.

KAREN SENTY, '55, Naperville H. S.  
Dorothy Scroggie, teacher



### AN AWKWARD AGE

Thirteen for a boy is an awkward age;  
His life's reached that horrible mixed-up stage.  
It's the forsaking of old playthings and impossible dreams;  
It's the end of "cops and robbers" and all of those things.

Though he hates to say good-bye to his boyhood joys,  
And pass his time with homework instead of with toys,  
There is one totally reimbursing new pastime to unfurl,  
'Cause poor thirteen-year-old boy will soon discover  
Poor thirteen-year-old girl.

JERRY UDWIN, '54, Bloomington H. S.  
May English, teacher

### MIST

Mist is a maiden  
Who softly passes by—  
Clad in the softness  
Of dew-filled nights . . .  
Drenched in the fragrance  
Of morning's hush.

BILL NETHERCUT, '54, West Senior H. S., Rockford  
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

### THOSE BLUE EYES

Those blue eyes sparkling  
Brighten my day.

Those blue eyes crying  
Sadden my way.

Those blue eyes smiling  
Make my life gay.

Those blue eyes dreaming  
Steal my heart away.

GLORY RYAN, '56, Alleman H. S., Rock Island  
Sister Louise, O.S.B., teacher

## GOLDEN GLASSES

Memory sees the world through golden glasses  
As she gazes back across receding years,  
Recalls the silver chimes of childish laughter,  
Forgets the bitterness of childish tears.

Memory can condense the years of waiting  
Into a single fleeting hour or two,  
See all decisions made and actions taken,  
But not the agony of thinking through.

In Memory's eye the distant past is gilded,  
Not stained with petty sorrows to redress;  
For Memory sees the world through golden glasses—  
She is the sentinel of happiness.

JANET ROUNTREE, '54, Evanston H. S.  
Mary L. Taft, teacher

## THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

Over the hills and from afar,  
Came the Wise Men following the star,  
Lo! they saw it stop and stay  
Over the stable where He lay.

In the poorest of shelters He was born,  
To deliver the world from sin and scorn.  
While angels filled the sky above  
Three Wise Men brought their gifts of love.

Shepherds came on bended knee,  
To praise their Lord and sing with glee.  
The world would be saved by His birth.  
Glory to God and peace on earth.

DIANE SCHOWALTER, '56, Alleman H. S., Rock Island  
Sister Mary Margaret, O.S.F., teacher

## SNOW JUMP

The snow is drifting down,  
Tiny white parachutes,  
Dropped from the giant gray airplane of the sky.

ARTHUR CARLSON, '56, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero  
Marjorie Diez, teacher

## IMPRESSIONS

The bitter cold  
Is colder when  
I think of all the people  
Who cannot return to a warm home.

The heat of summer  
Is more intense  
When I am reminded  
Of those who toil in sweat-filled rooms.

But the beauty of spring  
Surrounds everyone,  
And the bursting forth of each tiny leaf  
Warms my heart.

RUTH HORWITT, '54, Elgin H. S.  
Gertrude Meadows, teacher

## SKY PICTURE

Few have seen as days go by  
Things that happen in the sky:  
Monstrous faces, fairy lace,  
Knight in armor, chariot race.

Gladdening scenes, somber, too,  
Giving way to purest blue  
As winds in their unseemly haste  
Leave the sky a barren waste.

CHRIS WALKER, '55, J. Sterling Morton H. S., Cicero  
Erna R. Owens, teacher

## ALGEBRA

X plus Y—  
Yes, but why?  
A times B—  
I still don't see!

KAY DOLDER, '56, Marengo H. S.  
Helen Staubli Tipps, teacher

## THE DRAG

The moon was low, the sky was dark,  
The road was smooth and straight;  
I felt the surging power of  
My hopped-up Merc V-eight.

Then from the dark, a junky Dodge  
Pulled out wide to pass;  
I saw five grinning faces  
Pressed hard against the glass.

I hit the gas and surged ahead,  
But I couldn't beat that wreck;  
We took a curve at eighty-five,  
Still running neck to neck.

During the race two ruby lights  
From nowhere had just come;  
The drag was finished—quick and sad—  
It was the cops that won.

DENNIS MULLINS, '55, East H. S., Rockford  
Adele Johnson, teacher



## A WINTER DAY

As I looked out the window  
One cool and breezy day,  
The wind was calm and chilly,  
The sky was dark and gray.

The trees were gently swaying,  
The birds were flying high,  
The smoke was white and fluffy  
Against the dark gray sky.

The houses were sitting quiet,  
Puffing their pipes away,  
They acted as though they didn't care  
That this was a winter day.

RONALD BATES, '58, Centennial Junior H. S., Decatur  
Helen Hunsinger, teacher

## HONORABLE MENTION

- Alleman (Rock Island): "The Enemy," by Mary Helen Mueck (Sister Louise, O.S.B.); "The Marksman," by Michael Patrick (Sister Mary Margaret, O.S.F.).
- Bethalto: "Thanksgiving," by Joanne Leonard (Dorothy G. Rainey); "Thanksgiving Reservation," by Ray Gooch (Dorothy G. Rainey).
- Bloom (Chicago Heights): "Smoke," by Gayle Hineline (Ethel Mellinger); "Through the Window," by Susan Baker (Ethel Mellinger).
- Camp Point: "Summer Country," by Charlotte Booth (Mrs. Helen Wickliffe).
- Canton: "Holiday Shopping," by Louetta Johnson (Mrs. Orpha Stutsman).
- Evanston: "The Four Freedoms," by Jean Rovey (Helen Montgomery); "Blue Skeins," by Colleen Kennedy (Charlotte Whittaker).
- Galva: "Remembrance," by Judith Dewey (Mildred Dewey).
- Highland Park: "The Lake," by Bill Young (Mildred Peers).
- Kansas: "A Sunrise," by Clella J. Martin (Tressa Bennett).
- Kinmundy-Alma: "My Brother," by Donna Schooley (Ruby O'Dell).
- Marengo: "Rain," by Barbara Schneider (Helen Staubli Tipps).
- Moline: "And Life Goes On," by Sally Sohner (Barbara Garst).
- Morton (Cicero): "The Trinity," by Molly Hammett (Marjorie Diez); "But Most of All Alone," by Janet Smat (Marjorie Diez).
- Mount Zion: "Night," by Jim De Crevel (Helen Hunsinger).
- Naperville: "Indian Summer," by Mary Von Norman (Jeneinne Anderson); "Epigram," by Shirley Zaininger (Leona McBride); "Spring Cleaning," by Janet Pepiot (Dorothy Scroggie).
- Niles: "The Alley," by Suzanne Lange (Priscilla Baker); "Battle of the Bugs," by Neil Butzow (Doris Tillman).
- Peoria: "Dreaming," by Jerelyn Haskin (Emily E. Rice).
- Rockford: "Day's End," by Sarah Dixon (Maud E. Weinschenk); "Bright Days of Youth," by Michael Holquist (Maud E. Weinschenk); "Palmetto Leaf," by Nina Bulliet (Maud E. Weinschenk).
- Sacred Heart (Chicago): "Thanksgiving," by Mary Ann Fundarik (Sister Mary Andrea, B.V.M.); "The Skier," by Evelyn Borg (Sister Mary Andrea, B.V.M.).
- Streator: "Americans," by John Rees (Fay Homrighaus).
- Wilmington: "The Wife at Barkington," by Ruth Kahler (Esther Butler).